LABOUR MONTHLY

Founded 1921 Editor : R. Palme Dutt

COMMONWEALTH? EMPIRE?
The Editor

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INCOMES POLICY
Andrew Barr

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IMPERIALIST COUNTER-OFFENSIVE
Jack Woddis

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Prospects for the Student Movement — Alan Hunt

Open Letter to Mr. Michael Stewart — Jiri Hronek

JUNE 1965

Two Shillings

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LABOUR MONTHLY

VOL. XLVII No. 6 JUNE . 1965

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Notes of the Month

COMMONWEALTH? EMPIRE?

Some people seem to think that relinquishing an Empire has turned the Army into a stay-at-home force. Not a bit of it. The only overseas station lost to the Army is India. In Cyprus, Aden, Malaysia, British Guiana and Kenya many more troops are now stationed than before the War.

Current Army Recruiting Poster.

May 17, 1965

June will see the Commonwealth Premiers' Conference. June will also see, immediately after, the Afro-Asian States' Conference in Algiers. The former will comprise twenty-one states (seventeen Afro-Asian-Caribbean), covering one-quarter of the population of the world, or roughly the same proportion as the old Empire. The latter is expected to include delegations of some seventy states, covering the majority of the population of the world. Many of the representatives at the former gathering will travel on to the latter. May has already seen the meeting of certain other combinations. The South-East Asia Treaty Organisation, comprising five Western imperialist powers and three Asian states, met in London. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, consisting solely of Western imperialist powers, and excluding African, Asian or Latin American representatives, also met in London. Whatever the varied character and composition of these different gatherings, the same central problems have monopolised and continue to monopolise the attention of all. War in Vietnam. War in the Dominican Republic. Wars in Malaysia and Southern Arabia. Wars of Western armed mercenaries in the Congo. Together with the problems of racialism maintained by armed violence in Rhodesia and South Africa (not to mention the Southern United States). All problems of colonialism, colonial wars and racialism.

New and Old Colonialism

Not just the new strategy and techniques of imperialism to penetrate and undermine the newly independent states—the new strategy and techniques for which the Editor of this journal ventured very diffidently nine years ago to suggest the coinage of the term 'Neo-Colonialism', and was amazed to see how rapidly the term passed into general use during the subsequent years until by now learned

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books are written to speculate vainly on its origin. Today it is necessary to awaken public opinion, bemused into a self-congratulatory haze by the marvellous advance of newly independent states, to face the realities of the modern world. The Old Colonialism is not yet dead. The Old Colonialism is still very much alive and kicking with the utmost viciousness. Direct old-style colonial wars, 'gunboat diplomacy', armed aggression and invasion of other people's countries, to overthrow popularly elected governments or suppress national liberation movements and subjugate foreign peoples. Colonial wars at this moment are the centre of the modern international situation.

Labour and Empire

When the Commonwealth Premiers' Conference meets, we may certainly expect to hear, especially from that master of unctuous platitudes, Mr. Harold Wilson, paeans of self-praise on the wonderful way in which Labour 'gave freedom' to the Empire and replaced the old Tory Empire of colonial subjection by the new Commonwealth of Free Nations. Certainly the victories of the national liberation revolt of the majority of the subject peoples of the old West European colonial empires are among the greatest revolutionary achievements of the modern world—even though the independence from imperialism has still in many cases to be fully completed. But let us maintain a sense of proportion on who won the victories. President Nkrumah was imprisoned by a Labour Government before his state was 'given' independence by a Tory Government. However much the term may be anathema now, nowhere was the cult of Empire sung more loudly than by the leaders of Labour. It was not only the old J. H. Thomas who between the wars proclaimed 'We love our Empire', and subsequently joined the Tories. It was Herbert Morrison who, as a principal spokesman of the 1945 Labour Government, proclaimed in January 1946: 'We are great friends of the jolly old Empire and we mean to stick to it'.

Who Won Freedom?

It was Ernest Bevin who as Foreign Secretary proclaimed in parliament on February 21, 1946:

> I am not prepared to sacrifice the British Empire, because I know that if the British Empire fell . . . it would mean the standard of life of our constituents would fall considerably.

That characteristic proclamation of the gospel of Labour Imperial-

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ism happened to be made in the very month of the great Indian Naval Rising of February 1946, when the entire Indian Navy ran up the Red Flag alongside the flags of the national liberation movement; when the British Commander-in-Chief threatened to blow them out of the water; when the Bombay working class came out on strike in response to the call of the Naval Strike Committee in the ships lying off the waters in Bombay, and 250 were shot dead, according to the British official figures, on the streets of Bombay during the three days February 21-23 (the very moment of Bevin's speech); and when Premier Attlee got up in parliament, immediately after the news of the Indian Naval Rising to announce a new angle of vision in relation to India and the dispatch of the Cripps Mission, and the tortuous negotiations with the upper national leaders began, which ended in the recognition of the independence of India. When Mr. Shastri and Mr. Wilson enchange their mutual compliments, they will do well not to forget entirely the masses of the people of India, who have still to speak their final word, or the thousand Indian communist and popular leaders imprisoned without trial, or the Lion of Kashmir, historic hero of the Indian national liberation struggle, now detained and forbidden access to his own people.

True to Type

Lenin long ago showed that the basis of Labour Imperialism, of what used to be called reformism, of the modern opportunist type of Social-Democracy in the twentieth century, and of its domination of the labour movement in the Western imperialist countries, was colonial exploitation and the corruption of sharing in the spoils of colonial exploitation and assisting to maintain it. Ernest Bevin's famous proclamation of 1946, cited above, was only spelling out Lenin's thesis in popular language. When, therefore, at the present day Mr. Wilson, Mr. Stewart, Mr. Healey or Mr. Gordon Walker proclaim their fervent support for the armed action of the United States in Vietnam or Santo Domingo, or for the military rôle of Britain in Malaysia or Southern Arabia, and the absolute necessity to increase, at whatever cost, Britain's military expenditure to record heights in order to sustain this rôle, this attitude and policy should not have taken the mass of the labour movement by surprise, as if it were some startling and inexplicable departure from traditional official Labour principles, although in fact it has caused such indignant surprise. They are running true to type.

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Towards the Break with Imperialism

What is new and positive and of the greatest importance for the future is the strength of the opposition which this policy has aroused, especially against the war in Vietnam, among the broadest sections of the trade union and labour movement. When Lenin showed long ago the ruinous costs and bankruptcy of this type of opportunist calculation of the short-term advantage of a section at the expense of the basic long-term interests of the whole class, today experience is bringing this home to ever wider sections, as the unparalleled costs of military and colonialist adventures frustrate social advance, and impose increasing taxation, rising prices and policies of wage restraint. Thus, as Lenin foretold, the conditions are gathering for a new phase of the labour movement, breaking with the old basis of imperialism.

The Colonial Office That Never Was

When the Labour Government came into office in 1945, the ambitious Empire-minded Ministers embarked on a grandiose scheme, launched in 1946, to construct a gigantic new Colonial Office on a site opposite Westminster Abbey. It is one of the revealing projects less often recalled today by the pious chroniclers of that Labour Government. For this purpose they acquired the site formerly occupied by the Westminster Hospital and the old Stationery Office, facing Central Hall to the west and Westminster Abbey to the south, there to begin constructing in suitably historic surroundings the mighty headquarters of the greatest colonial empire the world had ever seen. Alas for the vanity of human wishes. Before the gigantic new Colonial Office building could be completed, the greater part of the colonial empire had crumbled away. Ten years later, in 1956, a House of Commons Select Committee described ruefully 'the unhappy history' of the whole scheme, and recommended abandonment. In 1958 the decision to abandon the project was finally taken by a Tory Government, after a cost of one million pounds:

> The Government have now decided that the greater part of the site shall not be built on at all, and a quite modest office block will be built on what remains. Accommodation for the Colonial Office is to be arranged elsewhere. . . . Total expenditure on a scheme that has now proved abortive will be at least £1 million.
>
> (*The Times*, November 20, 1958.)

So ends the parable of Labour's Crumbling Dream of Empire.

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The New Taboo

So the once holy term 'Empire', beloved equally of Tory and Labour acolytes, has now become the forbidden word.

> Oh no! we never mention her,
> Her name is never heard;
> My lips are now forbid to speak
> That once familiar word.

The transition proved a little awkward. Until the first world war the official title was 'The British Empire'; the King was the 'King Emperor'; even the self-governing White Dominions were collectively referred to as 'The Colonies': and the conferences with their Premiers were termed originally 'Colonial Conferences', later 'Imperial Conferences'. After the White Dominions had won effective independence by the 1926 Conference and the Statute of Westminster of 1931, the term 'Commonwealth' began to be used to describe the association of Britain and the White Dominions, although in legal usage the term was defined to cover the entire range of 'Britain and the British Dominions Overseas', including equally the White self-governing Dominions and the subject Empire of India and the crown colonies and protectorates, comprising seven-eighths of the whole. Thus the hybrid term 'Commonwealth and Empire' began to be used as a supposed description of the two sections, the self-governing section and the subject section. In this way the Official Handbook issued by the British Government in 1946 was entitled 'Handbook on the British Commonwealth and Empire'. Since 1959 the latest version of the official Handbook has become 'The Commonwealth in Brief'. Even 'British' has gone.

Some Last Redoubts

Of course there have been some lingering pockets of resistance. In vain the oracle of wisdom on imperial constitutional law, Professor W. I. Jennings, joint author of *The Constitutional Law of the British Empire,* tipped the wink to innocently perturbed Top People in *The Times* on June 6, 1949:

> Empire was associated with 'imperialism' which was the deadliest of all political sins. The use of 'Commonwealth' made political conditions slightly less difficult.

In that same year Premier Attlee sought to reassure the House of Commons on May 2 in an official statement on behalf of the Government that the three terms, 'The Commonwealth', 'the British Commonwealth' or 'the British Empire', should be regarded as

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interchangeable and equally valid: 'there has been no agreement to adopt or to exclude the use of any one of these terms'. As late as 1952 *The Times* could still lament in a last ditch editorial on January 15 of that year:

> The extension of the term Commonwealth . . . has blurred the edge of meaning. . . . It would be more than a pity if the name of Empire were to be driven out.

Those gallant last hopes were vain. The thin red line went down. By 1960 even that ultimate stronghold of traditional Conservatism, the Primrose League (founded under the patronage of Disraeli, who first introduced the term 'Empire' into official British usage), formally deleted the term 'The Empire' from its title and substituted 'The Commonwealth'. All that remains now, still unyielding, are the decorations invented by Lloyd George, the C.B.E., O.B.E. and M.B.E. The 'British Empire' may have vanished, but the 'Commanders of the British Empire' remain. They have not yet followed the example of the Primrose League to transform themselves into 'Commanders of the Commonwealth'.

Still the Largest Colonial Empire

Nomenclature, however, should not blind us to realities. It is true that since the second world war and the victory of the peoples over fascism the overwhelming majority of the former subject peoples of the Empire have won the establishment of sovereign independent states. The form and degree of independence may vary. In some cases it may still be heavily limited and cover continued British military occupation, as in Malaysia or Cyprus. In all cases it still covers continued economic penetration and exploitation. Nevertheless, this achievement of independent statehood is a tremendous achievement of the national liberation struggle, and opens the way for further advance. The conditions of the liberation struggle against imperialism have thus profoundly changed in character for this more than nineteen-twentieths majority of the former subject colonial peoples under British rule. But this should not lead to ignoring the significance of the situation of the remaining fifteen millions still under autocratic British colonial rule. In conventional official discussion these are commonly treated as a fragmentary minority, either on the way to independence, or too small to be 'viable' as states. This cavalier treatment is misleading. For an examination of their range will show that they are the key points of what is still, even in this limited sense of direct colonial rule, the

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world's largest remaining direct colonial empire. Also in this era of the near approaching end of colonialism Britain remains the biggest colonial power in the world, with possessions in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Oceania and Europe.

Focal Points of World Strategic Domination

These possessions include in Africa the storm centre of Rhodesia and the protectorates in South Africa; in the Southern Indian Ocean Mauritius (where a state of emergency has just been proclaimed by the Governor, and Guards have been flown in from Aden), the Seychelles and the Maldive Islands; in the Southern Atlantic St. Helena, Ascension Island and Tristan da Cunha; in the Mediterranean Gibraltar; in the Middle East Aden and in practice the protected sultanates of Southern Arabia and the Gulf; in the Far East Hong Kong; in Oceania a chain of islands; on the American continent Guiana and Honduras and at the tip of South America the Falkland Islands. Not large in terms of aggregate population. Some fifteen millions. But a survey of their positions on the globe will sufficiently show that they represent a range of key military-strategic positions spread across the world, and the framework of Mr. Wilson's policy picturesquely described as to be 'strong East of Suez'. It is here that arise the continuing forms of direct conflict with colonialism, colonial repression and colonial wars, the 'trouble spots', as in Aden or Guiana, or also, if we recognise that in fact Singapore and the nuclear bases in Cyprus are parts of the same strategic chain, in Malaysia or Cyprus. The anti-imperialist, in considering the problems of neo-colonialism in relation to the newly independent states, will be wise not to ignore the significance of the still continuing direct colonial empire and the vital importance of the independence of these peoples still to be won.

Mystique of the Commonwealth?

What of the newly independent states, with an aggregate population of 650 millions, whose Premiers will meet with the Premiers of Britain and the older White Dominions, representing an aggregate population of 85 million, in the Commonwealth Premiers' Conference. Seventeen of the twenty-one states are African, Asian or Caribbean. What link still holds this very varied and disparate assemblage together? Have we here a kind of ghostly survival of the old Empire, like the Holy Roman Empire lingering for centuries on the fragmented ruins of the old realm of Rome or Charlemagne? Certainly

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the professed spiritual or mystical links have grown thin. The Queen? Six of the twenty-one states are Republics. Parliamentary political institutions? Pakistan is a military dictatorship, while Ghana has established by popular plebiscite a one party state, and the majority of the other component African states have moved or are moving to this political form to express popular national unity and bar the way to imperialist disruption. A common foreign policy? Some are non-aligned; others are at the heart of imperialist military blocs. Some are imperialist; others are engaged in the struggle against imperialism.

Link of the Commonwealth

The real link of the Commonwealth is nothing so mysterious or metaphysical or spiritual. The real link is in essence what has always been the link of Empire in the modern era of imperialism: the rôle of British finance-capital. The sphere of the Commonwealth, together with the sterling area, represents the main overseas sphere of British finance-capital. A Board of Trade survey of net overseas investments of British companies (excluding oil, banking and insurance) at the end of 1962 showed 75 per cent to be in the Commonwealth or sterling area, as against 10·6 per cent in Western Europe or 9 per cent in the United States (*Board of Trade Journal*, November 5, 1963). This sphere of the Commonwealth and the sterling area represents the countries in which British capital is the predominant investor or foreign owner of resources, although in practice faced with increasing competition, especially from United States capitalist interests. Some slight remains of the imperial preference trading advantages still continue for Commonwealth countries in the British market. Special financial facilities are also available for Commonwealth countries to raise capital on more favourable terms in London. In addition, the periodical Premier's Conference provides a forum without obligations, an opportunity for diplomatic interchanges, and a channel for the still relatively weak Afro-Asian states involved to exercise a certain pressure on the imperialist states or obtain concessions in return for not bringing issues to too sharp a clash.

Inescapable Divergences

Inevitably the differences at this gathering of what now comprises four imperialist states and seventeen Afro-Asian-Caribbean states come increasingly to the forefront. Each successive Commonwealth

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Conference during recent years has shown the growing contradictions. The 1961 Conference led to the formal withdrawal of South Africa from the Commonwealth, although Britain strove to the last to prevent this, and approved this solution only after it had become clear that otherwise the majority of the Premiers present would have carried a decision for the exclusion of South Africa on account of its apartheid policy. It should be noted that this separation has so far been largely formal, and that the special imperial preferential trading advantages have been continued. The 1962 Conference met under the dark shadow of Britain's approach to join the Common Market, with the consequent prospect of putting up barriers against the entry of Commonwealth producers into the British market in favour of West European producers. Although Britain's attempt to join the Common Market was ignominiously rebuffed by the end of 1962, the blow to the economic links between Britain and the Commonwealth countries, and the distrust with regard to future prospects, has had lasting effects. The 1964 Conference was dominated by the question of the Rhodesian system of White racialist supremacy, after the African national movement had compelled the dissolution of the hated Central African Federation. This question of Rhodesia reaches an even sharper point at this year's conference. At the same time other questions press to the forefront, including the betrayal of the people of Guiana; relations with South Africa; the armed intervention in Congo; Aden and Malaysia; and the central international questions of the American wars against the people of Vietnam and of the Dominican Republic.

Tory Division over the Commonwealth

It is no matter for surprise that in face of this highly disparate character of the present composition of the Commonwealth Conference, the non-White majority and the visibly sharpening contradictions, an increasing and influential section of Tory opinion, previously the most ardent upholders of the sacred flame of Empire as the central emblem of their faith, should now have begun to display marked coolness towards the Commonwealth, and even to question the desirability of its continuance. *The Times,* which in 1952 had lamented over the prospect of the demise of the beloved term 'Empire', on April 2, 1964, created some sensation by publishing prominently a feature article by 'A Conservative' which denounced the Commonwealth as 'a gigantic farce . . the Commonwealth pretence does Britain harm.' In the ensuing controversy the

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Economist on June 6, 1964, gloomily pointed out that 'it may prove harder to bring to an end the Commonwealth than to preserve it . . . we may be stuck with it.' These were characteristic voices of the advocates of close association of Britain with Western Europe as a more profitable alternative than the dwindling sphere of the Commonwealth. Other sections, however, and still the dominant sections of the imperialists point out, as noted by the *Economist* in the same article, the importance of the Commonwealth as a 'bridge between races, between the new and the old nations, between the rich and the poor nations'. While doubts about the Commonwealth have thus spread in Tory circles, the Labour Party seeks to emphasise its rôle of foremost champion of the Commonwealth as the supposed embodiment of a new type of relationship free from imperialism. 'The Labour Party,' noted the article by 'A Conservative' in *The Times* 'has become the party of the Commonwealth.' But even here there is a conspicuous difference between the prospectus and the practice.

Queen's Speech and Mr. Wilson's Practice

That traditional prospectus and the Labour Government's policy, the Queen's Speech prepared for the royal lips to pronounce at the beginning of its term of office, proclaimed with regard to the Commonwealth:

> My Ministers will have a special regard to the unique rôle of the Commonwealth, which itself reflects so many of the challenges and opportunities of the modern world. They will foster the Commonwealth connection on a basis of racial equality and close consultation between member governments, and will promote Commonwealth co-operation in trade, economic development, educational, scientific and cultural contacts and in other ways.

If we turn from these benevolent promises to the realm of practice we enter a different sphere. 'Close consultation between member Governments.' Really? Where was the consultation on the 15 per cent surcharge on imports? The surcharge struck a blow at the trade of all the Commonwealth countries. It provoked loud yelps of pain and expressions of indignation from Commonwealth statesmen that they had not been consulted. There was no consultation on the raising of the Bank Rate to 7 per cent, although this was equally a matter of very great concern to all the members of the sterling area. It might be objected that such vital financial decisions, requiring prior secrecy and instant speed of execution could not be subjected to the processes of consultation. Precisely. Consultation on everything except the really important decisions most vitally affect-

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ing the Commonwealth countries. Or take the no less grave military and strategic fields. Where was the consultation over the decision to provide the British base of Ascension Island for the use of the Belgian paratroopers in order from this British base to make their armed descent into the Congo against the national liberation movement? Obviously once again consultation would have been highly impracticable, since many and probably the majority of the Commonwealth states of Africa would have raised strong objections. Thus the gulf between the initial benevolent professions of the Labour Government in relation to the Commonwealth and the actual colonialist practice has been brought into glaring prominence by recent events.

Lessons of Seato and Nato Meetings

These contradictions revealed themselves also in a different context and corresponding special forms in the Seato and Nato meetings which took place in London during May. The South East Asia Treaty Organisation was originally established in 1954 (the year of the collapse of French colonialism in Vietnam, and of the ensuing Geneva Treaty which guaranteed the independence of Vietnam and freedom from foreign military occupation, but which the United States refused to sign). The supposed object was the defence of South-East Asia. But of the eight states composing it five were non-Asian imperialist powers. Only three Asian states could be scraped up, all satellites of the United States at that time, Pakistan, Thailand the Philippines. But at this 1965 meeting Pakistan came out with open opposition to the United States war in Vietnam, and compelled the insertion of a dissenting paragraph in the communiqué. The Nato gathering consisted only of West European and North American imperialist and associated powers, with no Asians, Africans, or Latin Americans to cause trouble. But here also the battle could not be concealed. The revolt against the shameful American war in Vietnam and Dominican intervention found open expression, with only Britain fulfilling the contemptible role of the docile stooge in return for American support for its war on Malaysia. In the long struggle over the communiqué the United States strove to the last to get, if not support, at any rate some hint of absolution or sympathy. In vain. The final formula ran:

> The Ministers reviewed comprehensively the international situation with particular attention to areas of tension or conflict such as Malaysia, Vietnam, the Dominican Republic and some African states, where grave threats

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have arisen to international security and peace. They reaffirmed the right of all peoples to live at peace under governments of their own free choice.

Thus a stage has been reached where it is being found difficult to mobilise even Nato for the aims of imperialism.

Warning of the Local Elections

This advance of the fight in the international field against the offensive of imperialism, demonstrated in Vietnam, Malaysia, Santo Domingo or the Congo, is of especial significance for Britain and the internal political situation in Britain. The strength and range of the popular anger and campaign against the war in Vietnam, reaching the widest extent since the election last autumn, is a positive and healthy sign in British political development. Not since Suez, when the power of the popular campaign reaching throughout the labour movement finally compelled Gaitskell to change over from support of Eden's military action to opposition, has there been so wide a response. It is significant that this political stirring has developed most powerfully, not just over some home issue in isolation—and there have been plenty to arouse feeling—but over an international political issue embodying the fight against imperialism and war. There is revealed here, not only a response to internationalism, but at the same time the increasing recognition that this military imperialist policy abroad is bound up with Britain's problems at home. The local elections voting and abstentions have given a grave warning of the cost of this policy of war and military aggression abroad and consequent hardships and increased burdens for the people at home to pay for the military adventures. It is urgent to intensify the fight of the left in every field (and the example of the initial—but only initial—scotching of the Wilson-Brown try-out for a let-down on steel has shown what can be done) in order to prevent repetition of 1951 and rally the confidence of the people to go forward for the fulfilment of the aims for which they voted when they turned out the Tories eight months ago. The unity of the fight on the international field and the home field is demonstrated by all that is happening today.

R.P.D.

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INCOMES POLICY

Andrew Barr

President, National Union of Sheet Metal Workers and Coppersmiths

THE decision of the executives of trade unions affiliated to the British Trades Union Congress on April 30 in London, to support the *Statement of Intent on Productivity, Prices and Incomes,* can have serious consequences for the trade union and labour movement. If this retrograde incomes policy is pursued, the Labour Government will lose working class support and dig its own grave. A true friend is not one who accepts without question all you say or do. True friends of the Labour Party (and the trade union movement has proved over the years to be a true and loyal friend) must halt the drive to disaster, and should insist that a Labour Government is under an obligation to treat the trade unions differently than would a Tory Government.

Mr. George Brown, Minister of State for Economic Affairs, addressed the conference and advised that the delegates should exercise the 'minimum of emotion and the maximum of practical common sense'. He said the choice before us was 'Order or Chaos, Planning or Anarchy', and referred to the 'Great lunges of the Steering Wheels' of the economy, with which we are all so familiar in this unplanned society. 'We can make ourselves the masters and not the servants of economic forces', he stated.

Dealing with the suggested policy on Productivity, Prices and Incomes, he warned 'we must ensure that the unions are not called upon to accept impossible tasks and then blame them for its failure'. He concluded his address by stating, 'so long as we have a mixed economy, there must be profits. There is nothing wrong with profits so long as they do not exploit the consumer or the workers'.

George Brown was not exercising the maximum of practical common sense when he came out with that gem, or perhaps he has never heard of the theory of surplus value.

How can you avoid the great lunges of the steering wheel when, in fact, you are not in control of the ship? How can we master economic forces when the commanding heights of the economy are still in the hands of private enterprise? Mr. Brown tried to convince the conference that his Government had a plan on the matter under discussion, but when George Woodcock spoke, he told us there was no plan, the norm was not a rigid line, it was not a freeze, and Mr. Brown must not expect to keep down wages increases to 3½ per cent

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this year. He stated that 'wage freeze in the process of erosion would bring discredit on an incomes policy'. He made it clear that an incomes policy to be successful, 'must be accepted at the bottom'.

In my experience the incomes policy is not being accepted at the bottom and, in fact, is already in erosion. Take the engineering 'package deal'. Up and down the country, workers with the help of union officials and shop stewards are gaining increases in wages far in excess of that specified in the agreement. Apprentices have won substantial improvements and so have staff workers.

The Amalgamated Engineering Union's National Committee, meeting in Blackpool, have instructed their executive not to be party to any future 'package deal' which would 'preclude or obstruct wages applications at workshops or district level'. They are also to lodge a claim for equal pay through the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions.

Undoubtedly history will repeat itself on Productivity, Prices and Incomes. You see, we have had it all before. Cripps in the post-war Labour Government attempted to impose a wage freeze. The T.U.C. and the affiliated unions accepted the policy, but immediately union leaders all put up a case as to why their particular members were in an exceptional position and therefore wage-freeze should not apply to them. The workers at shop and yard level continued to struggle for higher wages and the executives were forced to act. As a result the wage freeze policy collapsed and in the process it brought the unions into disrepute. In particular it did untold harm to the Labour Government and contributed to its eventual defeat in 1951.

I spoke to many delegates at the conference on April 30, whose unions were supporting the Statement of Intent, and in every case they admitted that the norm of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent applied to the other fellows but not to them or the members of their particular unions. It was not applicable to the Members of Parliament who gave themselves an 80 per cent increase and it did not stop union officers taking substantial increases. (Let me hasten to add that I personally fully support reasonable incomes for M.P.s and union leaders, but if we do, surely we must apply the same principles to those whom we claim to represent.) It is sheer deception to support the Incomes Policy and not to apply it to your union, your members and yourself.

In support of the policy it is argued that this is necessary to maintain full employment and price stability. We have had increases in National Health insurance contributions, bus fares, cigarettes and tobacco, drink, income tax, rents, meat and many other foodstuffs.

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There is no machinery of enforcement regarding prices in the document, and, in fact, increases in prices will only be referred to the Incomes and Prices Review Board, after they have become a fact. On the other hand, workers seeking an increase in wages, particularly on a national level, will have all the glare of publicity, and the Incomes Review Board can comment as to whether the claim is in the 'National Interest' or otherwise, and so influence the outcome of such negotiations.

On the question of full employment, no doubt the workers in the North-East, Scotland and Northern Ireland will want to point out that they are very far from having full employment and therefore the document is based on a false premise. But it is on the question of profits that the policy really shows its class bias. There is no 'guiding light' for profits on the same lines as for wages and salaries. How have profits been doing over the past year? 3,985 companies produced net profits of £1,672 million in 1964. This is almost 15 per cent more than in 1963. It works out at £4·6 million per day or if you want to get it down to measurable proportions £53 per second.

The Prudential Chairman, Sir Frank Morgan, spoke of his company's record of profitable growth. The Life Association of Scotland Ltd. report 'Another Record Year'. The Gresham Life Assurance Society Limited record increase in new business at home and overseas. Godfrey Phillips reports 'profits up to 50 per cent'. Matthew Hall & Company Ltd. paid dividends of 30 per cent and the Chairman concluded his report as follows: 'No review of this nature is complete without a sincere thank you to all employees for their efforts during the year. It is a pleasure to record the board's appreciation of their loyal and enthusiastic support'. And last but not least, a revaluation of pubs, breweries and other properties owned by the Watney Mann group has revealed £44,400,000 in hidden property values. Will the price of a half pint of 'Red Barrel' come down?

Will Mr. Brown consider these profits excessive, and if so what can he do about it? Profits like prices only become known after they are declared. Even if some restriction is placed on the amount of profits for distribution, the company can arrange that the payment of a declared dividend can be suspended to a more propitious moment, while wage claims, if suspended, are lost for ever.

George Woodcock, speaking at the conference. intimated that if a union negotiated an increase in excess of the norm, nothing much could be done about it, but he went on to say, we could apply the

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'stigma', that they have not been good trade unionists. Where is the trade union movement going, when the leader of the T.U.C. can issue such threats and yet, as we all know, profits have reached peaks undreamed of by the most avaricious financial sharks? Of course the main reason why the report was accepted is the very real and genuine desire to assist the Labour Government. The Tories could never have sold this lot to the unions. Selwyn Lloyd tried and failed.

This raises the question as to whether we in the trade union movement should behave differently to a Labour Government than to a Tory Government. We, I think, must put it the other way round. We expect a Labour Government to treat the trade union movement differently than a Tory Government would. But in the end it depends on how the Government behaves. If it is following policies which are designed to strike at the basis of capitalism, policies which set our feet on the road to socialism, then obviously the unions would take this into account, but State intervention and guiding lights aimed at holding down wages will always be rejected. Until we have got to where we want to go (and surely 13 years of Tory rule and six months of a Labour Government have not got us there) attempts to impose an incomes policy from the top will not meet with any success. George Woodcock was quite right when he said it must be accepted at the bottom if it was to work. Those who support it should ballot their members and then we could really confirm if it is acceptable at the bottom.

We can only look at an incomes policy after we have put right what is wrong, and this is the kernel of the matter. For what is wrong is not that wages are soaring (though rent, interest and profits are) and causing the balance of payments problem. It is the huge sums being spent on armaments: £2,120 million this year. Last year it worked out at £60 per second; this year it has gone up to £67 per second. When Prime Minister Harold Wilson watches his clock, he might remember these figures as it ticks this vast sum down the drain on useless arms expenditure.

In West Germany over 50,000 British troops are stationed at a cost of £80 million to the British taxpayer, 75,000 East of Suez and 23,000 in the Mediterranean—a total of £350 million in overseas military expenditure. If the troops were brought home and put to productive work, if the arms bill was cut by half, we could soon transform the situation and cure the balance of payments problem. We could give the pensioners and those on insurance benefits a fair

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deal, and we could build the homes, schools and hospitals so urgently needed. The trade unions could be left to play their traditional rôle of protecting and improving the wages and conditions of their members.

The social effect of an incomes policy under present conditions can only increase rent, interest and profit at the expense of wages and salaries. Basically it makes the rich richer and the poor poorer. The unions affiliated to the T.U.C. should think again. The incomes policy cannot and will not work, to say otherwise is sheer deception.

Honesty with the rank and file and, in particular, honesty with the Labour Government, demands rethinking. If we do not we shall do irreparable harm to the trade union movement and seriously weaken the Government. This must not happen.

D. J. F. PARSONS, 1900—1965

D. J. F. Parsons, Secretary for over 20 years of the Labour Research Department, who died on May 1, 1965, at the age of 64, was one of the most valued contributors to Labour Monthly. *His first article 'Electricity Control in Britain' appeared in 1928 and thereafter, either in his own name or under various pen names, he wrote frequently right up to his serious illness in the summer of 1964.*

From the London School of Economics, Parsons came to the L.R.D. at the age of 22 and his life thereafter was devoted in one position or another to the service of the labour movement. Thoroughly acquainted with the structure of modern trade unionism he specialised after a while on the structure of capitalist organisation: and while in his twenties wrote Electricity, *which was the tenth of the* Studies in Labour and Capital *prepared for the L.R.D.*

His high cultural level and wide reading made him the obvious candidate for the Directorship of Martin Lawrence, *the firm of publishers (now merged in* Lawrence & Wishart) *which was responsible for the publication of the first (incomplete) Collected Edition of Lenin's Works in English, as well as for numerous books by T. A. Jackson, R. Palme Dutt and others.*

Responding to the war-time needs of the L.R.D. he rejoined its staff and three years later became its Secretary. He took over the remarkable Fact Service *and for 21 years was responsible for this four-page stencilled supply of weekly ammunition for the affiliated trade unions, many of which gladly made fullest use of it. His main work, the preparation of the trade union case in negotiating with employers, remained anonymous, as also were his innumerable articles in Labour Research. His selfless disposition and friendliness made him not only one of the most trusted advisers of British trade unions, but also one of the most popular.*

P.A.

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A.E.U. NATIONAL COMMITTEE 1965

A Delegate

MOST National Committee meetings leave their mark, not least this 47th meeting at Blackpool. The opening speech by Sir William Carron, President, who spoke of sacrifice to keep a precariously elected Labour Government in power, was the opening gambit in preparation for a speech the following day by George Brown, the Minister for Economic Affairs. Sir William said he confidently called upon the committee to give the government full co-operation in creating a Britain without 'social inequalities' and no doubt he was also thinking about the large number of resolutions demanding substantial wage increases and other benefits.

The Standing Orders Committee, which was entirely comprised of supporters of the platform, proposed the first resolution for the agenda submitted from one area:

> Instructing Executive Council to use all its power to convince the T.U.C. that only by the fullest support and co-operation of the trade union movement can the present socialist government hope to achieve economic stability and expansion in industry. Without 100 per cent support of the industrial wing of the movement no Labour Government could hope to implement their election programme and thereby strengthen their representation at Westminster in the future.

An amendment calling for 'introduction of severe controls and restrictions on prices and profits and eliminate the restriction on wages' was moved. It was argued that, whilst supporting some of the sentiments of the resolution, they could not concede a blank cheque when there was no evidence of forcing price stabilisation or the curbing of profits and it was thought that the wage freeze policy had helped to bring down the last Labour Government. One delegate said that he thought Mr. Brown had been guilty of 'kidology' in his speech on the Incomes Policy and that he had always thought that more money in the workers' pockets increased purchasing power and thus stimulated the economy. The debate became bitter, breast-beating speeches being the only answer to the amendment's supporters. The amendment was defeated by 37 votes to 14 and the resolution was then carried unanimously. The 150 or more lobbiers, some of whom sat in on the day's discussion, applauded the statements made by those delegates who wanted safeguards, but after the vote, Sir William indicated that he and the Executive would now

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support the Incomes Policy at a meeting of Union Executives on Friday, April 30.

Resolutions on sick pay, pensions and national agreements were carried without dissent, as also was a general statement on nationalisation. But some new advance was made when a resolution calling for scrapping of older ships and the building of new ones within nationalisation was successful. London asked for action on the chaotic and inadequate transport services, demanding:

(*a*) Suspend the 3 per cent paid to former shareholders.
(*b*) Extend the nationalisation of all transport.
(*c*) Abolish all fares and institute adequate services.

One-third of the delegates opposed (*a*) and (*c*), apparently not supporting anything that was not already government policy.

A large minority supported a resolution against buying any aircraft from the U.S.A. and asking for the cancellation of existing orders. Full support was given for extension of the Health Service to cover all preventative medicine and research into disease and illness and called for nationalisation of the drug industry.

Wages are normally the first item to be discussed at the National Committee meeting, but this year they were held back until the afternoon of Thursday and when the session ended no vote had been taken. So, Sir William and his executive moved on to London for the Union Executives meeting with the issue in doubt, but able to support the Incomes Policy. The debate continued and of necessity drew in the 'Package Deal' signed on December 22, 1964. Many delegates thought that 10s. in four years was in fact wage freeze. The barrage and battering against the 'package' continued in fury, one delegate going to some length to prove an increase of 25s. per week in the cost of living. The biggest assault was on that section of the 'deal' which restricted local negotiations. Both Sir William and John Boyd (E.C. member) said that in fact the limitation had not prevented any agreements locally. Sir William quoted the £1 per week just gained by the Pressed Steel time workers at Cowley, Oxford. Although some areas said they were experiencing difficulties, and this was emphasised again and again, the platform maintained their position. The wage resolution was narrowly defeated and the 'package deal' withstood the assault by 28 votes to 23—very close indeed.

Some further resolutions demanded no wage restraint and that future 'package deals' should not hinder local claims. They were successfully carried, showing that it will be increasingly difficult to keep back the national pressure on wages, and next year should

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see the 'package deal' under fire once again. Indeed, many delegates stated that they intend to press home wage demands without delay, because of pressure from the membership.

The only foreign policy resolution was an emergency one on United States action in Vietnam and this was not discussed until the final day. The resolution was concerned with the threat to world peace by events in Vietnam and instructed the Executive Council to bring to the notice of the Labour Government that:

> This union considers as a matter of urgency the ending of the U.S. bombing raids with the use of napalm, phosphorus and gas and that this matter must be settled by peaceful negotiations: and urged the re-calling of the Fourteen Nation Conference on Vietnam in order to prevent the widening of the conflict and the possibility of nuclear war.

Because of the criticism of the United States in the resolution, a feeble effort was made to justify an amendment, which deleted the portion on U.S. bombing. The amenders thought that the offer of unconditional talks by President Johnson was sufficient. Against the run of the debate, and reason, the amendment just squeezed through.

The positive decisions taken and the large votes demanding the government to take another look at the path it is following are a warning, and a guide for the future.

As the committee terminated, it was reminded that the following three weeks would be spent revising the rules of the union. The new Secretary, Jim Conway, had much to say about the 'New Look' of the A.E.U. and referred to the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions as having no future. He also talked of 'taking over' other unions who had been 'living off' the A.E.U. and called for one union for the engineering industry. The committee have an important three weeks ahead of them.

TORYISM AND THIEVES

Politics of course have next to no interest here and are rarely discussed. Tory almost to a man; a quite intelligent jewel thief gave me an amusing reason why: 'Under a Conservative Government private jewellery collections are inevitably bigger so "For better hauls vote Tory".'

(Letter from a *Labour Monthly* reader in one of H.M. Prisons.)

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OPEN LETTER

TO MR. MICHAEL STEWART

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

Your Excellency:

I was very interested in the newspaper reports on your stay in Czechoslovakia, and I am certain that this visit, and the negotiations that you entered here, will find a not insignificant place in your diplomatic calendar, which in itself is certainly far from being uninteresting. I am also certain that I am not the only one in Czechoslovakia who followed your stay here with interest. It was, if I am not mistaken, the first visit of a British Foreign Secretary to our country.

It was not only with interest, but also with sincere pleasure that I read in the final communique the mention of the favourable development of mutual relations of our countries, particularly in the field of economy and culture. You mentioned this favourable development to representatives of the press in Prague as well, and I am convinced that this was not merely a diplomatic formulation, since this favourable condition of relations is confirmed by practical experience in our economic and cultural circles, and I believe that the situation is similar on the British side.

In your meeting with the representatives of the Prague press, however, rather extensive mention was made of the stand of the British Government with regard to the Munich agreement of 1938, which inflicted a mortal wound on the Czechoslovak Republic of that time, and was the direct prologue to the temporary loss of its independence. If I followed the press reports accurately, you were questioned, Your Excellency, as to whether your country, or to put it more precisely, your Government, considers the Munich agreement invalid from the very moment that it was signed by the heads of state of the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Italy.

This is a question that is felt very strongly about in our country, and I personally feel that the relationships of the individual countries to 'Munich' expresses--and will for a long time in the future continue to express—their relationship to the Czechoslovak State and its people, its sovereignty, its independence and the integrality of its territory.

Although I read your reply to this query very carefully several

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times, as it was recorded in the press, I must say, Your Excellency, that I failed to find this recognition of the complete invalidity of this agreement contained in it. You said (and here I am retranslating your words from the Czech news reports) that the agreement has been dead for a number of years, and that it cannot be a basis for any territorial demands against Czechoslovakia. I am certain that this is true, in your opinion, and this opinion of yours is shared by many other important persons in Britain, including members of Her Majesty's present Government.

Unfortunately, however, the case is somewhat different in the country whence the setting forth of such demands might be expected —I am speaking of the German Federal Republic. Officially, the Federal Government also declares that it has no territorial demands against Czechoslovakia (although it does have such demands against the Poles); nevertheless it simultaneously grants political, moral and material support to immigrant organisations, for whom a return to the Munich policy is a direct programme. The words of Minister Seebohm, calling for a return to Munich, are certainly familiar to you. A year ago, they created a commotion not only in Czechoslovakia, against which they were aimed, but abroad as well—also in the Anglo-Saxon world, if I am not mistaken. I would like to point out, Your Excellency, the recent words of F. J. Strauss, former Federal Minister of Defence and current chairman of the coalition Bavarian Christian Party. He said, in Nuremberg, the following: 'The fate of German territories on the other side may not be ignored. It is not only the homeland of those who were chased out, but also the homeland of the whole German people. National dignity demands that we fight for every metre of this land.' Mr. Strauss, a politician of whom we have read that he has aspirations for the position of the next Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs, went on to demand that the Federal Republic also take care of Germans living beyond the borders of the country, and speak in their name as well. He had in mind Czechoslovak citizens of German nationality. The last time anyone dared to make such an open proclamation of crude intervention into internal affairs was when in the thirties Hitler mobilised all Germans abroad, and made subversive agencies of them. Czechoslovakia has the bitterest of experience with this method of German expansive imperialism.

The words of Mr. F. J. Strauss are certainly an original contribution to the Twentieth Anniversary of the victory of the democratic world against aggressive German fascism.

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You also said in Prague, Your Excellency, that your Government considers any kind of propaganda of territorial demands against Czechoslovakia to be bad, and dangerous for European security. But I feel that even such an accurate classification of revanchist propaganda may be not enough. The effective stopping of its dangerous influence would, in my opinion, also call for the undermining of the foundations against which it leans, and the springs which nurture it. One such foundation, and one such spring of anti-Czechoslovak revanchist campaigns is the Munich agreement. One way or another, the revanchists will always refer back to it, they may even condemn Hitler—but not because be dictated it, but rather because he violated it by his attack on Prague in March 1939. This is of course nothing but a trick of revanchist propaganda, because Munich and the occupation of Prague are simply two consequent segments of a single act of liquidation of the Czechoslovak State.

You also said, Your Excellency, that you understand the fears of the Czechoslovak people, fears of the misuse of the Munich agreement for the setting forth of territorial demands. I think that you would cause valuable satisfaction to the Czechoslovak people, and the numerous friends of Great Britain in its ranks, if you could come to understand the fact that our call for the recognition of the invalidity of the Munich agreement 'from the beginning' is not a formal caprice, but that it is founded on grave experience, and that it is entirely justified, historically, morally, and politically. I might say that the more countries recognise the invalidity of Munich—and that goes particularly for the signatories of the agreement—the weaker will be the position of the adventurous elements who call for a new territorial expansion, and the stronger will be the platform of European security.

I should once again like to express my pleasure at what was achieved in the development of British-Czechoslovak relationships during your stay in Prague. Nevertheless, I beg you to accept, Your Excellency, the few comments above, meant very sincerely, concerning the question of recognition of the invalidity of Munich.

JIRI HRONEK,

Prague, Czechoslovakia.

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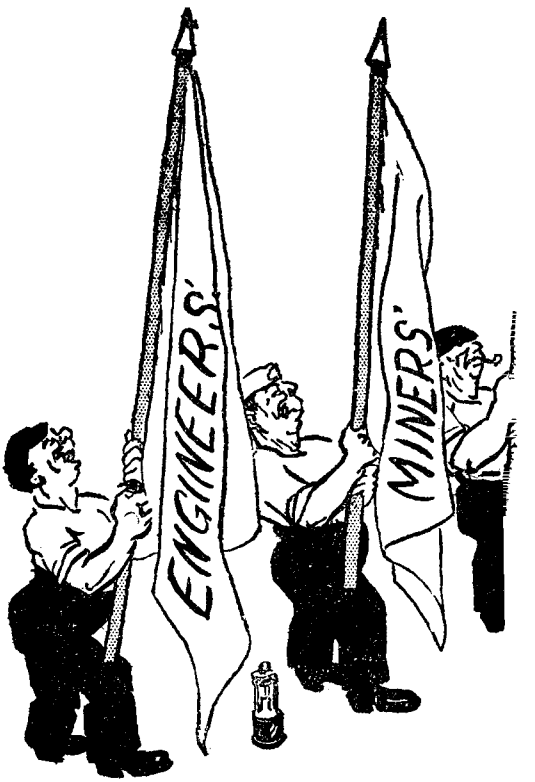
FORTY Y



"TROOPINC

SUNDAY WORKER: As a result of the June 4 Conference, the fight which millions of British workers are making against the capitalist attack on wages and hours has been gravely prejudiced. The capitalist press is gleefully declaring that there will be no Workers' Alliance.

But victory was to come

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·ARS AGO

HE COLOUR"

Sunday, June 7, 1925

LABOUR MONTHLY: There is no question of the will of the workers for a united struggle. Why then is it not realised? . . . A flood of capitalist propaganda, a flood of threats and tales of ruin, is being let loose to frighten back and spread hesitation among the workers' representatives.

·d Friday', July 31, 1925.

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IMPERIALIST COUNTER-OFFENSIVE IN AFRICA

Jack Woddis

EVENTS in Africa over the past six months have demonstrated beyond any shadow of doubt that U.S. imperialism, shabbily aided and abetted by its partners-in-crime, especially Britain and West Germany, has passed over to a new counter-offensive in Africa. The attack on Stanleyville on November 22, 1964, was only the opening shot in a new imperialist move which now threatens the entire continent of Africa.

Intensified U.S. aggression in Vietnam. U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic. U.S. counter-offensive in Africa. All are part of a single imperialist pattern. Each action is a desperate American counter-thrust to the further advance of the people. For, make no mistake about it, the people are advancing. The American actions are but a counter-offensive to stop the people's march.

Just consider the significant strides made by the African people in 1963 and 1964. In August 1963 the puppet government of Fulbert Youlou was overthrown in Congo (Brazzaville) by the mass action of the people, and a new popular government came to power. In October 1963 a widespread movement of the people removed the reactionary government in Dahomey. A similar move in Gabon was only thwarted when French paratroops reinstalled the unseated government. In January 1964 a people's armed uprising overthrew the government of Zanzibar, only a couple of weeks after independence had been won. And in October 1964 the military régime of Abboud was overthrown by a general strike and other mass actions by the people of Sudan.

Thus, in little more than twelve months, five unpopular governments had been overthrown—in one case by armed action, in three by a general strike backed by mass demonstrations. Only in one case, that of Gabon, which had been more in the nature of a coup at the top than a wide movement of the people, had the imperialists been able to stage a comeback.

But that was not all. There had been a significant general strike in Nigeria, embracing nearly a million workers, followed a few months later by a general crisis in connection with the general elections. Huge demonstrations had shaken Senegal. The Liberation Army in 'Portuguese' Guinea, led by Amilcar Cabral, had made important gains, liberating nearly two-fifths of the territory, and

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winning international acclaim. In Angola, the Movement of the People for the Liberation of Angola (M.P.L.A.), headed by Agostinho Neto, had regrouped its forces, launched a new offensive, and won a measure of recognition and support from the Organisation of African Unity (O.A.U.). Armed struggle was openly launched in Mozambique by the liberation forces connected with the national movement, FRELIMO, in September 1964; and, a week later, the Sawaba Party announced the opening of armed struggle against the government in Niger.

Of equal significance had been the deep-going economic and social changes made in 1963 and 1964 in Algeria, the United Arab Republic, Ghana, Mali, and other African countries. What was clearly taking shape was the emergence of a group of six or seven African states which were beginning to cut themselves adrift from imperialism, to restrict the growth of indigenous capitalist forces, and so make possible a march towards socialism which would avoid the stage of full capitalist development. In addition, many states, including those in East Africa, had established economic and diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

These historic achievements of the African people had resulted in a further heightening of the people's understanding, and a growing opposition to imperialism and its neo-colonialist intrigues.

These developments filled the imperialists with alarm. It was to halt these advances that the latest imperialist counter-offensives have been launched.

Central to these intrigues has been the installing of Tshombe in Leopoldville, and the assault on Stanleyville. On February 19, 1965, the *Tribune des Nations* (France) spilled the beans. The landing of paratroops in Stanleyville, it wrote, was only part of Nato's strategic plan. The aim was 'a much vaster intervention which would transcend the frontiers of the Congo'.

Certainly, the last six months since Stanleyville bear this out. The counter-offensive has taken the following forms: assassinations of progressive leaders; plots to overthrow popular governments; military action to intimidate such governments; fresh attempts to divide the people by beating the drum of anti-communism; and measures to disrupt the O.A.U. and to isolate Ghana, one of the most consistently anti-imperialist states.

Take first the question of assassinations. On January 15, 1965, Pierre Ngendandumwe, Premier of Burundi, was assassinated—and the assassin proved to be a former employee of the U.S. Embassy

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in that state. The murder of the Prime Minister was followed by a change of government policy towards the national liberation forces in neighbouring Congo (Leopoldville). In February 1965 three national leaders in Congo (Brazzaville)—the Chairman of the Supreme Court, the Prosecutor of the Republic, and the Director of the Information Agency—were kidnapped; shortly afterwards their corpses were found, shockingly mutilated. On February 24, 1965, one of Kenya's outstanding national leaders, Pio Pinto, was assassinated by gunmen outside his home; it is rumoured that others on the gunmen's list included the Vice-President, Oginga Odinga, the Minister of Information and Tourism, Achieng Oneko, and another well-known left-wing leader, Bildad Kaggia.

Now look at anti-government plots, and military intimidation. In Tanzania, President Nyerere announced a few months ago the discovery of an anti-government plot in which, it was alleged, U.S. Embassy officials had been involved. In Congo (Brazzaville), the deposed president, Youlou, was smuggled out of the country to Leopoldville, at the end of March 1965, in preparation for a new plot to restore him to power. In Malawi, all the progressive ministers were forced out of government or compelled to flee, and the country is now openly being run under British control, with British officers running the army, police force and intelligence services, and with British officials guiding all the key departments of State.

From their base in Congo (Leopoldville), U.S. planes attached to the Tshombe forces have attacked neighbouring Uganda and violated the frontiers of Sudan. In a strong statement to the Uganda Parliament, the Prime Minister, Dr. Obote, openly accused the United States of complicity in the attacks; at the same time, a special Cabinet meeting of the Kenya Government felt it serious enough to warn the United States and to declare that the Kenya Government was ready to give 'every support to the Uganda Government in defence of her territorial integrity and sovereignty'. In recent weeks, too, Portuguese forces have launched attacks from 'Portuguese' Guinea across the frontier of the Republic of Guinea (former 'French' Guinea).

So dangerous has the situation become that President Nkrumah, in an address to the Ghana Parliament on March 22, 1965, declared:

> The Government of Ghana has unmistakable evidence that plans are in an advanced state of preparation for the overthrow of the progressive government of the Congo (Brazzaville) and other states by certain powers. Ghana will go to the assistance of the government and people of Congo, Uganda, Tanzania, Sudan, Kenya and others in the event of aggression.

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He added that he had held recent discussions with presidents Sékou Touré (Guinea), Modibo Keita (Mali) and Ben Bella (Algeria), during which they had agreed to 'continue to maintain great vigilance against increasing penetration of imperialists and neo-colonialists in Africa'.

A major effort is now being made by the imperialists to disrupt the unity of the African people. Anti-communism has reared its ugly head in Kenya again, and outstanding national leaders such as Odinga, Oneko and Kaggia have been made the subject of virulent attacks because of their steadfast refusal to abandon their championship of the people, or to compromise with imperialism. Equally serious is the attempt to split the O.A.U. In February of this year, fourteen French-speaking states in Africa met at Nouakchott, and set up a new body, the Afro-Malagasy Common Organisation (O.C.A.M.). The formation of such a separate body is, in itself, a virtual violation of the O.A.U. Charter. Worse still, since the formation of O.C.A.M., a number of statements have been made by the states associated with the new body, accusing Ghana of 'subversive' activities, and threatening not to attend the O.A.U. Conference due to be held in Accra in September. A key rôle in all this diplomatic activity has been played by Tshombe, whose reappearance on the African scene since last year has itself been a lever in the hands of the imperialists to disrupt African unity. Acceptance or non-acceptance of Tshombe has now become a central issue at all O.A.U. gatherings. It is significant that *Congo-Africa,* the pro-Tshombe new bulletin published in London by the E. D. O'Brien Organisation, in hailing the support given to Tshombe by certain African states, has recently written:

> The result has been a revolt from within against the O.A.U. and the revival of something similar to the 'Monrovia' group of nations, which was originally formed to counter the extremism of the 'Casablanca' group. The core of the 'Monrovia' group was the U.A.M. (*Union Africaine et Malgache*) of fourteen French-speaking nations. This was a political and defensive union of 'moderates'; but under pressure from the extremists of the O.A.U. it was wound up over a year ago and replaced by a purely economic organisation (U.A.M.C.E.) without any political influence. Now, as a result of the Nouakchott Conference, the former union has been reborn as the O.C.A.M. (*Organisation Commune Africaine et Malgache*) and its natural allies are the same countries that belonged to the old 'Monrovia' group, such as Liberia, Nigeria, Sierre Leone and Ethiopia. Their combined votes are sufficient to sway the decisions of the O.A.U. and effectively to block the extremists (No. 79, March 11, 1965).

The warning is clear enough. With the aid of a number of states whose rulers are ready to play the rôle of neo-colonialist puppet to

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their masters in Washington, London and Bonn, the imperialists are preparing new offensives against Africa. The other part of these moves is the holding of the 'Zambesi line'—that is, the retention of Rhodesia, Angola, Mozambique, and South Africa, and the formation, official or otherwise, of an alliance of these states to bar the way to further African advance and to launch fresh assaults against those who refuse to play the imperialist game.

The danger has been well expressed by President Nyerere: 'I think that we are at present passing through the stage of a second invasion of Africa'.

The maximum effort and understanding will have to be displayed by the African people, and the maximum solidarity expressed by the British people, in the struggle now unfolding to defeat the 'second invasion of Africa'.

THE NATO LOBBY

AS President Johnson was warning Europe over the 'Early Bird' satellite that Nato had 'unfinished and urgent business', delegates representing many thousands of people in seven Nato countries, were preparing to lobby the Nato Ministers assembling in London for the Nato Council meeting of May 11-13.

American women from California, Michigan, New York and Vermont, members of the 'Women Strike for Peace' organisation, which was to the fore in the 15,000-strong Washington demonstration on April 17 against the United States involvement in Vietnam, were flying to London said Mrs. Boscoff of Maryland 'as we did to Paris in December and to The Hague in May of 1964, to join with hundreds of women in an effort to discourage any and all proposals that lead away from disarmament and that may lead the world further into war'. This was the main concern of all the delegates, who came from West Germany, from France, Belgium and Holland, to join the U.S. and British peace groups who lobbied the Nato Council at Lancaster House.

Three deputations of five different nationalities were interviewed and the waiting crowds of deputees handed their messages and letters to an official. Madame Sémanaud handed in a message from 10,000 supporters of the French Movement for Peace who participated in a pilgrimage to Oradour-sur-Glane. This village, a few miles from Limoges, is a symbol to the French people of the horrors of war, for it was the scene of a nazi massacre: men were rounded up in a

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barn and machine-gunned, while the women and children were locked in the church and burned. The message warned that:

> Twenty years after the defeat of the nazis, world peace remains precarious. At this moment war rages in Vietnam and the Dominican Republic, because the U.S. refuses to respect the rights of these people to gain independence.

Another message from the President of the 'Voice of Women', Canada, appealed to the Nato Ministerial Conference:

> to abandon the outmoded military character of Nato and to transform Nato into a tool to reshape Europe into a nuclear-free, demilitarised area . . . and further we urge the Nato Ministerial delegates to reject any request from the U.S. for military aid to the war in Vietnam, using every avenue to persuade the American delegates to announce a moratorium on the bombings.

The American women were also distressed over the U.S. rôle in Vietnam and their petition 'urged all concerned nations to press for a cease-fire and for negotiations rather than permit themselves to be drawn into the conflict'.

At an overflow meeting in the Grand Committee Room of the House of Commons on the evening of May 11, Konni Zilliacus, Labour M.P., spoke of the origins of the Nato Council and of the dangers of its present rôle of negotiating from strength or threat of force, and he warned that Britain was 'bleeding to death economically through excessive and rising defence costs'. Mr. Zilliacus advocated disengagement, disarmament, and a non-aggression treaty between the Warsaw alliance and the Nato countries. William Warbey, M.P., spoke of the dangers of Nato and Seato being dominated by the biggest power in them and said he saw 'the ghost of John Foster Dulles in the developing global military strategy'.

Mrs. Cora Weiss, a housewife from New York, addressed the gathering of M.P.s, representatives of C.N.D. and British Peace Committee, as well as the many delegates and lobbyists from all over Britain and abroad. She spoke of the need to keep reminding our foreign ministers to keep the German finger off the nuclear trigger and enthused those present with her lively account of the growing peace movement in the United States. She spoke, too, of the growing movement amongst students and Professors, which has President Johnson worried at this moment. Count Von Westphalen of the German Peace Union, warned that his country had 'twice kindled the spark of a world war, and now again, there are forces who would like to start a war'. The British lobbyists' point of view was most effectively summed up by the delegate of the Eckersley Women's

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Co-operative Guild. She spoke of her better rejection of Mr. Wilson's foreign policy, but she rejoiced in the new back bench pressure and wished them 'more power to keep up the good work'.

Thus were the wishes of the people presented to the Nato Council and it is interesting to note the divisions within the Council itself which became apparent in the final communiqués.

LETTER FROM AN AMERICAN

I WAS a participant in the international deputation to the London Nato meeting on Tuesday, May 11, to protest against the American invasion of Vietnam and Santo Domingo, and to urge refusal of nuclear arms to West Germany. I am an American woman, unaffiliated to any organisation. I am completely appalled by what my country is doing in Vietnam and the Dominican Republic. To go into another country with troops and planes and bombs simply because we do not like the politics of that country and to start bombing these people *in their own country* is horrible, unjustifiable, unchristian, unethical and appalling. If we carry this illegal license to its full conclusion, we can do this not only in Asia and Central America, but in Europe and in England. If we decide we do not like what is happening politically in England, we can move right in with troops and planes and start bombing. I am shocked that the Labour Government can back this international brigandage. I am shocked that the other sycophant members of Nato, excepting France, did not rise up and condemn resoundingly these monstrous actions of the United States. The image of the 'ugly American' must now be indelibly stamped in the memories of the people of the world. I grew up loving my country, believing in our identity with peace, democracy, brotherhood. I can no longer feel that way. I now think of my country as a fascist bully, menacing other countries with bombs and monitoring their opinions by giving or withholding financial assistance. I am sick at what is happening. Where are the forces that must rise up to stop this by-passing of the United Nations, this invasion at will of other countries?

Mrs. Lord.

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'PHYSICIAN, HEAL THYSELF!'

R. Page Arnot

('Ever higher' quoth the eagle, as he soared aloft from his cage in the London Zoo: and forthwith hit the headlines, becoming a nine days' wonder. It was all in the month of March. 'Ever higher' quoth the British Medicals, caged in the National Health Insurance scheme, as they too hit the headlines with their pay claim. 'Good luck to them', quoth many a socialist surgeon. 'Bad cess to them' was the retort of Labour ministers; while some felt the same as did Belgian trade unionists a year and more ago about these wholesale proffered resignations.)

THE excitement has simmered down in these last three months. Seriously, however, there is no question about it: the doctors here have had a raw deal, nonetheless rasping because it was their own representatives who years ago stacked the cards that way.* The sick, too, have suffered by it—other than those who pop in and out of the London Clinic or the King Edward VII Hospital at the behest of the hierophants in Harley Street. As to the Hospital Service it still retains some birthmarks of the Poor Law and the eleemosynary charity from which it emerged.

Hardly anybody has drawn the obvious moral about the parlous condition to which medicine has been brought in a capitalist country. But outside the class angle there can be no clear understanding of the matter.

Ask anybody here who and what are these holders of medical degrees, and they will tell you it is a profession, not a mere trade or employment. It is one of the learned professions like the law and the church: but unlike these it demands long and arduous years of training which should surely win them the meed of high remuneration. Naturally they do not repeat the old gibe against themselves that all professions are conspiracies against the public: nor do they ever seem to solve the puzzle of how it is that in capitalist society top lawyers are paid more than top surgeons and middle lawyers more than middle physicians, and so on downwards.

The clue, of course, lies precisely in these gradations which reveal that medicine is not only a profession but is also a heterogeneous economic class, which has come down into modern capitalist society from late medieval times. The other great example of such a survival

*For details see article by G. Richman in April number.

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is the peasantry whose conditions are sufficiently well known in countries of Europe and Asia to serve as a yardstick or rather a stethoscope to measure how the medical profession breathes. The peasantry, the petty-bourgeoisie of the countryside in Europe and Asia, are capable, when hard put to it, of jacqueries, sudden revolutionary outbreaks: but they have never attained a permanent solution for their problems except in association with the organised working class. Not that this was a simple 'Hail-fellow-well-met' association. It required careful analyses, of which the most outstanding was that conducted by Lenin in the case of the multitudinous Russian peasantry. Broadly speaking he found they could be assigned to three sections within the one class, namely: the poor peasantry, called *byedniaks*, the middle peasants or *sredniaks* and the rich peasants or *kulaks*. The hope lay in getting the first of these out of the leadership—and the clutches—of the last section. Once this had taken place they could be associated with the organised working class in creating a new society and so solving their own problems as well.

Let us consider the doctors under this aspect of petty-bourgeoisie, whose tradition it was to take fees, high fees where they could get them from the rich and low fees from the poor—but never to sell their labour power, never to be hired out at a wage or salary.

Of course the analogy with European and Asiatic peasantry cannot be pushed too far. There are many included in the catalogue of family doctors who batten on the infirmities of the genuinely unhealthy but fabulously wealthy, to be found summering on the south coast of England and wintering on the Riviera. They make a good thing of it—even if they do not all reach the affluence of Sir Ralph Bloomfield Bonnington or Mr. now Lord Cutler Walpole. Moreover, even the least affluent physician is a Croesus compared to the peasant on the Welsh hills or the Hebridean crofter.

This old reluctance of theirs to become a hired man, or one of the proletariat as we should say, or, by a refinement, of the salariat is difficult for others to grasp in capitalist Britain where the overwhelming majority are proletarians willy nilly and where the once numerous peasant petty-bourgeoisie were liquidated as a class by the ruling capitalist landlords. But three thousand years ago Achilles declared to Odysseus that he would rather be an hired man (Theta Eta Sigma) upon earth than reign as king of the dead in Hades. And in Africa this century only the imposition of a crushing poll tax by the British Government overcame the refusal of the peasants to go

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and become hired men at however much enhanced an income. They hugged their independence, their unhired condition, just as Bavarian peasants forty years ago could be seen toiling through a fourteen-hour day and proudly regarding themselves as on a higher level than the eight-hour day factory worker—who was hired to work for a master. This was their cottage industry. This is also the cottage industry of medical men, who have hugged their 'independence' for a couple of generations and now at what cost in overwork.

The dream of the peasantry of a free independent livelihood with his land-hunger satisfied lies in the past and cannot be realised. The ultimatum of the British Medical Guild with its dream of an independent existence outside N.H.I., with status-hunger satisfied and grateful fee-paying patients, is equally illusory.

What is the solution? Short of socialist transformation the first step is to recognise and proclaim the distinction between the cottager, the *byedniaks* of the profession working long hours, and the *kulaks* of the profession, happily dancing attendance on pregnant princesses. These last insisted on removing health centres from the Beveridge-Bevan scheme of things and bedevilled the lot of the general practitioner whose interests they claimed to represent. The traditional image of 'the good physician', of the family doctor, was presented to the world as the type and pattern of all modern medical men.

This, to borrow a coarse expression from the continent of North America, is 'all boloney'. Out of the four score thousand on the medical register only some twenty-three thousand are in the condition of family doctors. Out of some sixty thousand actively engaged in medical work, the G.P's are much less than half. Here come the *byedniaks,* the cottagers, who do not know their own interests as distinct from the interests of the *kulaks*: and who seventeen years ago were led by the nose into a maze of contradictory and paradoxical methods of remuneration which left the best at the mercy of the worst.

To find a way out of the maze a clue for the Russian *byedniaks* was found by Lenin in the Committees of Poor Peasants. The British analogue, it is clear, would be a real trade union (such as the Medical Practitioners' Union) and not a body which by some theological subtlety can hypostatise itself as a Guild, and next day as a Ghostly Comforter. But then, of course, inside such a trade union there would come up tendencies to McCarthyism—which, inside the

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Labour Party, did not wholly perish with the late officially-lamented Herbert Morrison. Nevertheless it is a first clue for the G.Ps to grasp.

But why stop at this? Why stop short of social transformation? After all, the profession is transforming itself. As many years ago as there are days in 1965, the question was asked: 'Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased, pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow?' Three rival neurologists, as this century began, each gave a thundering affirmative in answer: hence, the appearance of a new specialist whom the workers, with an infallible wit, designated the 'trick-cyclist'.

What if each neurologist had a different basis from the other for any clinical successes? After all, Ptolemaic astronomy predicted eclipses with tolerable accuracy; and, at the least, enriched our English tongue with many metaphors. That profession too has been transformed.

So, why not help transform society too? Why not come out of those petty-bourgeois dreams amid actuality and drudgery, and return to the company of your giant predecessors, to Galen and the School of Salerno, to Ambroise Paré and Ramazzini, to John Hunter and Louis Pasteur?

Samuel Butler once asked 'Did Jesus Christ die for me?' and answered 'Yes, in the sense that the London, Midland and Scottish Railway was built for me'. Similarly, we may suggest that Hippocrates wrote his *Airs, Waters, Places* not only for his own day but for a socialist society of the future. If so, then it is high time his disciples should lay their healing hands upon that future and help bring it to the birth.

Meantime the first thing is for the G.P's to realise their own class position within a class society, and so catch an ariadne thread to find a way out of their labyrinth of troubles.

Hitherto, to ask G.P's to look at themselves from a class angle was like asking a kitten to look at itself in the glass angle. Hold it up to the mirror and it immediately turns away its head. Let us hope that this crisis may at last drum dialectics into the venerated skulls of that most useful member of society—the family doctor.

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PROSPECTS FOR THE STUDENT MOVEMENT

Alan Hunt

Vice-President, Leeds University Union

IN the May *Labour Monthly* Michael Costello analysed the changes that have been taking place in the student movement in Britain. The Council of the National Union of Students (N.U.S.) held just before Easter, marks an important step in these developments. The 783 delegates and observers came together in a tense atmosphere which had been prepared by an unprecedented campaign in the national press designed to focus attention on a supposed 'Communist takeover'. This publicity continued through the five days of the meeting attempting to keep alive the Communist bogey. The majority of the delegates responded by passing an emergency motion condemning the *Evening Standard* for a particularly vicious article.

For the past eighteen months the present Executive of N.U.S. has been using the theory of a 'Communist menace' and 'the danger of minority groups' to retain their own positions in face of a rising demand for a more dynamic and forceful leadership to advance the interests of British students. The Council reflected this need in electing a left-wing Labour student to the position of Vice-President although he had been branded a Communist, despite the fact that he contested the Greater London elections for the Labour Party. As the one Communist standing for election—the sole representative of the mythical 'takeover'—my vote increased indicating that many of the student leaders present recognised the sterility of anti-Communism and that it was being used to obscure the major issues confronting the student movement at the present stage.

The strenuous efforts made by the Executive to defeat any change in the present archaic and undemocratic election procedure exposed their fear of the unity that has been developing amongst progressive students irrespective of affiliations. Anti-Communism is a weapon used to destroy unity; but the basis for a far more lasting unity is growing around the need for the N.U.S. to involve its 250,000 members in its activities. In the past, N.U.S. has been a vehicle for student politicians and has had no real influence with the mass of the students. Yet without the involvement of the majority of the students the organisation can only remain weak and ineffective. The prospect in the coming years is to ensure that the bulk of the

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students understand that the N.U.S. represents their interests and at the same time expects support from them.

In the past the Executive has always paid lip-service to the need for a dynamic approach to the work of the National Union. But by amending out of recognition the motion from Manchester University calling for a Student Charter to act as the basis for campaigning at a local and a national level, the Executive failed to tackle the acute problem of involving the membership. By opposing a motion from University College, London, calling for a national campaign to end the Means Test on student grants, the Executive exposed their complacency. The only major achievement which the Executive reported to Council was that the Prime Minister had invited them to dine with him. While it is encouraging that Mr. Wilson is aware of the existence of the N.U.S. it is no guarantee that we will see action on the major demands advanced by the students.

At the Council meeting the Executive continually pleaded the need for 'responsibility'; that is 'responsibility' in the eyes of the Press who will only be too pleased to see the student movement impotent and passive so that it can concentrate on creating the image of student debauchery and immorality. The responsibility which the Executive forgot about was their responsibility to the membership. Many of the smaller colleges find it exceedingly difficult to find the affiliation fees and the many thousands of students outside the N.U.S. are unlikely to join unless they see the organised students going to the public with their policies.

Most of the positive features in the present situation of the student movement have come as the result of local initiative. The massive support that has gone out to the people of South Africa has been the work of local Students Unions, so have the efforts to expose the financial hardship caused by the imposition of the Means Test and the unfair position of students in relation to National Insurance benefits. In every case local activity has resulted from the practical co-operation between students of widely different opinions but united by their common concern for student needs. At Leeds University great success has been achieved in uniting sixteen societies—from Conservatives to Communists and Catholics to Methodists—to form a Peace in Vietnam committee against the American aggression. Earlier in the year wide support was found for attempts to democratise the running of the Students Union to ensure that all policy was laid down at General Meetings at which all members had the right to attend; this plan failed by only 15 votes to receive

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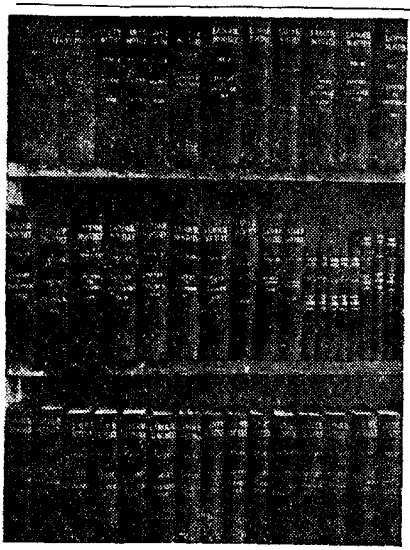
the necessary two-thirds majority at a meeting of over 600. It is these developments which demonstrate the desire of students to co-operate and break down the prejudices of the Cold War. It is this participation in the affairs of immediate student concern, whether it be Vietnam or the conditions in halls of residence or the standard of catering, that is resulting in Communists and progressives winning positions of responsibility in their Student Unions.

The real need at the present stage is to extend the initiative from the local to the national level. Just as long as the N.U.S. fails to give effective leadership to campaigns that reflect the need of students for better conditions of study and wider educational opportunity, so long will the Press be able to damn the students as apathetic and irresponsible. The opportunity is before the student movement in the next few years; they must have an organisation which unites the rapidly growing membership. This will not be achieved if at the national level the organisation is obstructed by anti-communist manoeuvres.

The President of the N.U.S., Bill Savage, concluded the Council with the statement that N.U.S. had 'a mandate to move forward'—what this Council did not decide was how this move forward was to be achieved; what is quite certain is that it will not take place on the basis of inflated 'professionalist' approach or on the basis of anti-communism. The wide unity that was developed on progressive policies and against the use of the witch-hunt at the Council is the key to ensuring that N.U.S. and the student unions play their part in representing the needs and aspirations of British students.



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MARX AND BRITISH LABOUR, 1863—1872

Andrew Rothstein

BRITISH working class history has still to be told at full length. Marxist writings, which alone take their stand consistently on the workers' side, are still few (though none the less notable for that), and are usually sneered at by professional historians as 'propaganda'. That is natural. Most academic historians are trained in the tradition that bourgeois history-writing is *not* propaganda—it does not 'take sides', it 'rises above' the class struggle (sometimes), it views that struggle 'dispassionately', believing that 'to understand everything is to pardon everything'. And to understand everything it is precisely recorded detail that matters, not a broad general view. When such writing at academic levels is translated, so to speak, into school textbooks, the class struggle becomes still more shadowy and unreal, a matter for a shrug of the shoulders and a pitying smile. The consequence as a rule is to hide from the British workers of today, most of whom have no encouragement to go beyond school textbooks, the true meaning of their forefathers' deeds yesterday—as effective a form of propaganda as anyone could wish for.

In this state of affairs one is thankful for small mercies. A book entitled *Karl Marx and the British Labour Movement** recently published provides a number of them. The sub-title of this book by Collins and Abramsky is 'Years of the First International'. They try, as they say, for the first time at such length 'to assess the International in relation to the industrial and political movement of the British working class'. The material they have industriously assembled will be of value to everyone concerned with this subject, or with the evolution of political ideas among the British workers generally. One need only turn, after reading their book, to any of the modern histories of this period used in British universities, extension classes or schools to see its usefulness. The book summarises previous attempts to translate internationalism in the British labour movement into organisation. It discusses briefly the various events which raised that internationalism to new heights between 1859 and 1864: repercussions of the London builders' 'Nine Hours Movement', the democratic movement in Italy led by Garibaldi, the American Civil War, the Polish national insurrection of 1863, the growth and

*Karl Marx and the British Labour Movement. Henry Collins and Chimen Abramsky. Macmillan. 356 pp. 42s.

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activities of the French labour movement. Its running account of discussions in the General Council of the International Workingmen's Association and at its congresses and conferences, against the background of contemporary political and economic struggles between capitalists and workers, will be the first handy guide for most people who may not have the leisure to read the admirable 'Documents of the First International', now in process of publication. The bibliography will be very valuable for those wishing to take the study further.

For these very reasons it is the more necessary to point out that the academic historical method mentioned above has nevertheless taken a severe toll in this work. Space prevents more than a very few examples.

Marx's ideas proved their 'ineffectiveness' in Britain because in them he assigned to trade unions a 'subordinate' rôle (p. 52) and indeed, in his famous Inaugural Address of 1864 (analysed at some length) 'completely ignored' them (p. 117). The authors do not attempt to explain why in that case the General Council, with some of the most influential trade union leaders among its members—those 'real powers', in fact, mentioned by Marx in a letter to Engels, whose presence persuaded him to take part in the meeting which founded the International—accepted the Address unanimously.

But the Address, contrary to what the authors say, declares that the 'one element of success' which the workers possess is their numbers, 'if united by combination', and that this applies not only internationally but 'in each country'. What would workers at the time who read it understand by 'combination'? In the Rules, with which the Address concludes, 'working men's societies' and 'associations' are referred to, as the basis of the organisation, no less than *eleven* times in seven clauses. Could not the present authors have guessed that what Marx had in mind—and what his colleagues understood (and would today)—was trade unions, here and abroad whatever they might be called? The British organisations were the most powerful, and had the biggest prestige. But they were not alone.

In France there were 'syndical chambers' and 'mutual aid societies', formed by workers with very limited aims, 'under unnoticed and vague titles', as their historian Paul Louis wrote fifty years ago—but the realities of class struggle (and the standing of trade unionism in Britain) were pushing them into assuming trade union functions. In Germany the workers' educational societies, founded under Liberal auspices, were also impressed by British experiences, and

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were moving in the same direction, as recorded in Bebel's memoirs: so were the Italian workers' mutual benefit societies, in spite of the Liberal doctrines imposed on them by Mazzini. For all of these the general terms used in the Address were a step in the cleansing of Liberal (or Proudhonist) rubbish from the heads of their most advanced members. Nor, as the minutes of the General Council themselves show, was there any standardised term in Britain in 1864, four years before the Trades Union Congress came into existence—and even yet the T.U.C. standing orders speak four times of 'societies' when they mean unions!

The mirage of catching out Marx on a verbal point has only served to obscure the reality—that he was supremely aware of the importance of the trade unions, both in their strength and in their limitations.

Again, we are told more than once that the International in England was 'stagnant' by 1867 (p. 82), that by 1869 it had been 'virtually stagnant for two years' (p. 97), and so on. And yet we find (to take a few examples) that after September 1867 trade union affiliations 'continued to come in' (p. 88), that after September 1868 Applegarth, secretary of one of the largest British unions, was an enthusiastic supporter (pp. 91-2), that in August 1869 the T.U.C. at Birmingham unanimously recommended workers' organisations to affiliate (p. 96), that in January 1870 Odger—one of the best-known trade union leaders—found his association with the International 'something of an asset' in an election campaign (p. 170), and that in November the same year the Birmingham and the Manchester and Salford Trades Councils affiliated (p. 187) and so on. What kind of 'stagnation' was that—or what do the authors mean by the word?

The answer is simple. They have adopted the formal, or Ministry of Labour, or Registrar of Friendly Societies, criterion as their guide —numbers affiliated, dues, financial organisation. Yet important as these are—and the International was, they show, eternally plunged in money troubles—working class history shows that there have been many organisations which exercised a profound influence on their times, and did not therefore 'stagnate', but had small membership and shaky finances all the same.

One more characteristic example. After the end of the International in Europe in 1872, Marx's 'creative period . . . was at an end' (p. 210). He did 'extraordinarily little' on volumes II and III of *Capital* in the 1870s—and his other writings, up to his death in 1883, do not 'occupy many pages' (p. 296)'. 'He no longer had the

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capacity for sustained creative work' (p. 297). He could not now 'face the prospect of a long period of painfully slow development' (pp. 297-8). And when Marx wrote to the Russian Socialist Vera Zasulich of a 'nervous disorder' which had troubled him for ten years, this—the authors hint—was due to disappointment (p. 298).

Now it is not as though nothing was known either of Marx's wretched health or of his work during these years. The lasting consequences of his privations in the '50s and '60s, coupled with overwork, and the worry about his wife's advancing cancer, are reflected fully in his correspondence—and also the fact that every year he spent months at Continental or British watering places trying to fight chronic liver disorders, pleurisy and recurring bronchitis, as well as resultant nervous troubles.

But as for his work, the detailed chronicle of his activities published in the new Moscow and Berlin editions of his and Engels' collected works provides overwhelming evidence of the enormous amount he did in these very years, in defiance of doctors and going far beyond the list drawn up by our authors. The thorough revision of *Capital* for the French edition, 1873-1875 (which the authors mention only in passing, as though it were a minor matter), in reality (to use his own words) 'has independent scientific value on the same footing as the original'—so much so that he advised Sorge in America (1877) and Danielson in Russia (1878) to use his amendments for their projected editions. From 1875 until 1882 we find Marx accumulating vast material on agrarian relations and agricultural statistics for the U.S.A. and Russia in particular, but also for India, Java and other countries, with a view to a fundamental work on land rent. In 1880 and 1881 he got through a mass of Blue Books and official reports on the economic development of the U.S.A., and literature on the economic development of Russia after the emancipation of the serfs in 1861—all intended to extend and improve the second and third volumes of *Capital*.

Moreover, far from his letters showing him disheartened and without creative impulses as our authors suggest, they reveal on the contrary an immense enthusiasm and many fertile suggestions, as the working class movement began to recover from the defeat of the Commune and the resulting international police terror. Concern for revolutionary principle in Germany which produced (amid a constant flow of comment in the correspondence) the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, a theoretical work of primary importance, in 1875; initiation and supervision in 1876-77 of the German edition of

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Lissagaray's *History of the Paris Commune of 1871* (which he called the 'first authentic' and 'best' work on the Commune): collaboration with Engels in producing the fundamental *Anti-Duehring* (1878); and the withering attack on opportunism among the Social-Democrats known as the 'Circular Letter' (1879)—each of these required great concentration and thought. Yet our authors mention only the first. Concern for the French movement produced (apart from the new edition of *Capital* previously mentioned), after discussions with Guesde, Lafargue and Engels, the theoretical preamble to the programme of the French Workers' Party in 1880. The authors do not mention this either—nor yet the famous letter on Russia's social and economic future to the editorial board of *Otechestvennye Zapiski* (1877), reflecting some of the results (decisive ones indeed) of his agrarian studies. Other evidence could be brought.

How comes it that our authors overlooked all this? They supply the probable key themselves in two chance remarks—that the *Critique* was 'not meant for publication' (p. 296), and that such of Marx's work as they do mention 'for the most part remained unpublished' (p. 297). *Their criterion of sustained creative work, it seems, is whether it was published.* This is quite usual in university appointment boards (providing the work is to their taste)—but it can hardly be made the test of whether a revolutionary thinker and political leader has left his creative period behind.

To correct these and one or two other manifest errors would not diminish the *historical* value of the book, although it would certainly change its *political* significance.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Making of the Prime Minister
Anthony Howard & Richard West
Jonathan Cape, 240 pp. 25s.

WITH THE CURRENT similarity between the foreign policy of the Labour and Tory governments, and with Sir Frank Soskice as Home Secretary playing the part of a poor man's Henry Brooke, the main interest of this volume is in its description of the social trivia which distinguish the domestic life of our present Prime Minister from that of his immediate forerunner. 'Domestic' in this sense means as applied to what the Americans call 'the Presidential family', that is to the whole entourage which surrounds an aspirant to high power: gag-men and image-creators as well as spouses and relatives of the blood, rivals discreetly strapping their knives as well as supporters enthusiastically whipping up support among the cagey or the uncommitted. The U.S. overtone is appropriate because the authors state that they have modelled their work on Theodore White's 'The Making of the President' (about the 1960 U.S. Election) and record, among the profundities dropped by

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Harold Wilson between pipes, 'We're getting round to the Presidential system here'.

'Getting round' seems to imply that the personalities of the party leaders is what determines the result of general elections. The authors concentrate almost exclusively on personalities, omitting any reference to policies except in connection with the timing chosen by Wilson or Home in making their announcements. Wilson, narked by Home's reference to Labour policy as 'a menu without prices', confides: 'I'm not going to reply to him (on prices) this evening. I'm going to go on the land prices, which they haven't said anything about and I don't think they'll have anything about it in the manifesto'. But we never get to hear what Wilson said that evening about land prices.

We are also never quite clear how the remarks of Wilson and Home here recorded have been preserved for posterity, and whether A. Howard or R. West was sitting opposite Wilson in the restaurant car as he smothered his chop with H.P. sauce. From internal evidence, they seem to have been physically nearer to Wilson, or to have better contacts with those near to Wilson, as we do not receive so many politically significant disclosures about Home, and shall never know if he likes mayonnaise with his salmon. We have realised, after the later ramifications of the Vassall case, how much newspaper stories are written on the basis of other newspaper stories, and the two journalist authors have followed this tradition by collecting most of the best-known anecdotes about Macmillan and the Tory high-ups, and Gaitskell and the Labour leaders, and laying them end to end to provide an amusing and readable account of the leadership struggle in both parties which led up to the 'presidential' election. Only the thoughtful reader need be disturbed by the inference that the parliamentary struggle is still the old game between Ins and Outs. The authors frankly admit that their subject is personalised politics, and students of human nature can be grateful for an attractively packaged collection of breath-taking banalities, of which the most revealing is the remark attributed to the then 14th Earl of Home when asked why he re-entered politics in 1951: 'It seemed rather stodgy just to stay at home and live on your money and look after your estates'.

JUDITH TODD.

The Future of Britain's Railways
Roger Calvert
George Allen & Unwin, 176 pp., 35*s*.

WHEN THE PLAN to modernise our railways was conceived in 1954, it was correctly claimed that the railway system in this country was one of our greatest national assets. In his book, *The Future of Britain's Railways*, Roger Calvert forcefully reaffirms this. While packed with facts and statistics, this powerful document is very readably written and can be just as readily appreciated by the untrained mind as by those would-be students and experts on the highest levels who are doing untold damage to the most dependable system of transport this country knows, and which our forebears slaved their guts out to provide us with.

Calvert knows why so many passenger trains are running about half empty: 'Fares have been raised again and again. The business tycoons travelling between London and Birmingham, or London and Leeds, can no doubt afford to make the additions to their expenses accounts, but the effect on the private traveller has been to drive him away'. On the

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safety and mobility of our roads, the author writes with an equal elementary knowledge: 'A load requiring 100 lorries, and 100 (perhaps 200) men to man them, can be carried by one train manned by three men. The train would cost a quarter of the price of the lorries and last three times as long'.

After reminding us that there is traffic worth £280 million being transported by road each year that can be more suitably carried by rail, he goes on to point out that 7,000 people are now being killed each year on the roads. Then he explains why rail is so much more safe than road. 'On the railway the *Weekly Notices* contain information about engineering works, signalling alterations, and speed restrictions. The drivers must sign that they have seen this and any supplementary day-to-day items. Moreover, before a driver takes a train, even a freight train, over a line, he must "know the road".' In contrast we allow any man or woman who has passed a simple driving test to sit down behind the wheel of a car, capable of perhaps over 100 m.p.h., on which the brakes may have been passed as fifty per cent effective some months previously, and to drive this vehicle where he likes on the 200,000 miles of road in Britain.

Over and over again the author comes heavily down against the Beeching Plan, and in his book he advances strong and sensible views on how railways can be more fully used to ease movement not only throughout the country as a whole, but to a much greater extent in most of our main cities. Never was the need greater for a properly planned railway system in this country, operated as a service to the people, than it is today. The awareness of this shown by Roger Calvert on almost every page of his book rings with a solid logic we simply cannot afford to ignore.

ROBERT BONNAR,
E.C. Member, N.U.R.

Old Myths and New Realities
Sen. J. W. Fulbright
Jonathan Cape, 147 pp. 18*s.*

ONE MUST CONCLUDE—but reluctantly—that this is an important book, above all for what is left out. Here is the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate—with a considerable reputation as a liberal internationalist and as the single Senate vote against funds for McCarthy's inquisition in 1954—proclaiming 'we must dare to think "unthinkable thoughts" '. His title implies a challenge: a clearance of the mental cobwebs which have become barbed wire entanglements around the sacred cows of American political thought. Without undue modesty, and with the enthusiastic support of his publishers on the jacket, he regards himself as a trail-blazer. Certainly he says several things which badly need saying and which doubtless need to be repeated many times in order to secure a hearing in the U.S.A.

But this is 'new thinking' in blinkers. Each time an old myth is exposed and broken through, the Senator reveals himself as the prisoner of another. The chapter on 'The Cold War in American life', for example, courageously attacks the price the American people have paid for concentrating their national effort on the goals of military and technological supremacy: widespread poverty and unemployment; weaknesses in education and the absence of an effective health service; teenage violence, urban blight and racial tension. But the cold war itself remains a necessary and unchallenge-

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able fact of life, both now and for the foreseeable future. Nothing is so revealing as the complete indifference —which can scarcely be accidental —to the effects of the cold war on American thinking and policy in the field of civil liberty and the right to one's own ideas, however 'unthinkable'.

Senator Fulbright refers several times to the 'implacable hostility' of the Communists; he can accept some kind of 'thaw' in American relations with the Soviet Union, but his views on China and Cuba are as narrow as any diehard could desire. One feels that he would only demur from the military adventurism of General Maxwell Taylor for fear that it might not succeed, and he seems to think much the same of the Bay of Pigs fiasco. A few quotations set the tone for the rest: 'I do not think that the United States can or should recognise Communist China or acquiesce in her admission to the United Nations under present circumstances' (p. 38). (Notice the liberal face-saving of the last three words, with no indication given as to how circumstances might change). 'I am not arguing against the desirability of a concerted free world economic boycott against the Castro regime, but against its possibility' (p. 29). 'Step by step their (the Soviet leaders) revolutionary zeal may diminish, as they find that a peaceful and affluent national existence is not really so tragic a fate as they had imagined (p. 66).

Perhaps it is too much to expect a first effort in 'unthinking' to go further; doubtless some of the doors here unlocked will be opened wide by bolder spirits, some of whom are already speaking up for sanity in American life. But meanwhile Senator Fulbright bears the responsibility of his position and the danger is that would-be progressive Americans may accept him at his own valuation: as a guide to what is reasonable and practicable in U.S. foreign policy today. That this *would* be dangerous is clearly shown by the parallelism between his views on Vietnam (pp. 41-44) and the recent actions and pronouncements of President Johnson. In March 1964 he saw the effective choice for the U.S.A. as being either to step up the war in the South ('with renewed American efforts to increase the military effectiveness of the South Vietnamese Army and the political effectiveness of the South Vietnamese Government') or to expand the scale of the war by direct commitment of American forces and attacks on the North. Negotiations were ruled out as useless 'until the question of advantage between the two sides has been substantially altered in our favour'.

As if this were not enough to leave a bad taste in the mouth, it is rounded off by a typical piece of 'liberal' sleight-of-hand. Having stated that the purpose of the United States is not to secure military power or spheres of influence in South-East Asia, but only 'to establish viable, independent states . . . . free of and secure from the domination of Communist China and Communist North Vietnam', this objective is then attributed to the Geneva agreements of 1954 (which precisely warned against this interpretation, seeking to achieve the re-unification of Vietnam), and 1962, which the U.S.A. tried so hard to prevent and which she has been able to render ineffective!

K.M.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

BOOKS

The Authentic Portrait, Leslie Smith. Hodder & Stoughton. 222 pp. 16s.
Unemployment & The American Economy, Arthur R. Ross. John Wiley. 216 pp. 38s.

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WAR NO MORE

Not unexpectedly, most of our letters last month touched on the twentieth anniversary of the ending of the second world war and our Editor's Notes dealing with this. They bitterly reflected that the war-aiming bodies Nato and Seato had used England for their current meetings and expressed shame and anger at this.

'R.P.D.'s estimate of the German "third time lucky" attitude is a timely and serious exposure', writes a Lancashire friend who has developed flourishing sales of *L.M.* in his area. 'There are nuclear weapons now, that's the difference.'

A Yorkshire donor feels 'the need for *L.M.* is more urgent than ever in view of the dangerous men-of-war working to put the clock back. The horror of the war years must never be repeated'.

Readers who make a valuable contribution by selling *L.M.* at meetings and demonstrations usually have interesting comments to make. 'I've found the last two issues particularly in demand', writes one such Londoner, 'and with *L.M.*'s masterly survey of current events I'm not surprised. Ivor Montagu's "Escalate Peace!" was especially appreciated'.

A Scottish O.A.P., sending a gift that constitutes a real sacrifice, concludes his letter by saying 'It's not American dollars that the Vietnamese want—it's to see the back of the departing Americans'. We must hasten to speed them on their way.

Helen Falber.

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Our thanks to you all.

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Published by the proprietors, The Trinity Trust, 134, Ballards Lane, London, N.3, and printed by Wembley News, Wembley, Middlesex, Great Britain. Registered for transmission by Magazine Post to Canada, including Newfoundland.

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